Old Babylonian I (A005629)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

    Credits 5.0   **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2023-2024

    A (semester 2)   Dutch   Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2023-2024

    De Graef, Katrien   LW21   lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2023-2024	**crdts**	**offering**
Micro-credential The Ancient Near East Unriddled	5	A
Micro-credential The Ancient Near East Unveiled	5	A

Teaching languages

    Dutch

Keywords

    Akkadian, Old Babylonian, Cuneiform Writing

Position of the course

This introductory course aims at familiarizing the students with the Old-Babylonian language and cuneiform writing on a scientific basis. Old-Babylonian is the South-Mesopotamian dialect of Akkadian, the oldest attested Semitic language, and was spoken and written during the first half of the 2nd millennium BC. Special attention will be devoted to the origin, evolution and basic principles of cuneiform writing, the linguistic structure of Old-Babylonian within the evolution of Akkadian and the Semitic languages as well as the cultural history of Mesopotamia in the 2nd millennium BC. The course gives the student a basic passive (translation) and active (theme) language knowledge and the attitudes necessary for the academic study of Old-Babylonian (insight, accuracy and motivation).

Contents

The grammar of Old-Babylonian is taught through theoretical lectures and guided exercises (seminars) from the standpoint of the scientific study of the language. Apart from the grammar, the student will learn a basic vocabulary (ca. 300 words) and a basic corpus of ca. 200 cuneiform signs. This will allow the student to understand and translate sentences and simple texts (both from Old-Babylonian into Dutch and from Dutch into Old-Babylonian) in transcription and to read sentences and simple texts in cuneiform writing. The student learns to study the language in a systematic and scientific way: with insight, on a theoretical basis and with much stress on basic structures. In this way, the foundations are laid to elaborate this theoretical knowledge autonomously. As Old-Babylonian is a member of the Semitic language family, the student is familiarized with the characteristics of this family. Parts of this is done through lectures, after which much attention is paid to master the acquired knowledge (grammar, vocabulary and cuneiform writing) by practice in seminars.
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Initial competences

- Good knowledge of Dutch
- General insight in Dutch grammar
- Passive knowledge of English, French and German

Final competences

1 To have an insight into the structure of Old-Babylonian and to have a basic knowledge of morphology and syntax of Old-Babylonian.
2 To have an insight in the origin, evolution and use of the cuneiform writing system.

3 To have a grammatical knowledge of Old-Babylonian that has a strong theoretical fundament and can be put to practice.
4 To know the basic vocabulary of Old-Babylonian and the basic corpus of cuneiform signs.
5 To be able to transliterate, transcribe, analyse grammatically and translate autonomously and without help Old-Babylonian sentences and simple text in cuneiform script.

Conditions for credit contract

This course unit cannot be taken via a credit contract

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

- Lecture 15h: theory
- Seminar: interactive 20h: students prepare exercises and texts which are corrected in class
- Guided self-study 5h: students practise cuneiform signs and vocabulary through exercises available via Curios

Learning materials and price

Syllabus, scientific literature and powerpoint presentations offered via Minerva

References

Huehnergard, J. 2011: A Grammar of Akkadian (= Harvard Semitic Studies 45), Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns (3rd edition).
von Soden, W. 1995: Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik (= AnOr 33), Roma: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico.
Labat, R. 2011: Manuel d'épigraphie akkadienne: Signes, Syllabaire, Idéogrammes, Paris: Geuthner.
Borger, R. 1988: Assyrisch-babylonische Zeichenliste (= AOAT 33/33A), Kevelaer: Verlag Butzon & Bercker.

Course content-related study coaching

By using interactive teaching there is a permanent feedback and possibility to ask questions during class. Tests corrected individually help the students to assess their weaknesses and progress. After the examinations there is feedback.

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

periodic evaluation
written examination with open questions
The written examination comprises questions concerning the basic structures, practical implementations of the grammar, a translation (Old-Babylonian – Dutch; in transcription as well as in cuneiform writing) and a theme (Dutch – Old-Babylonian; in transcription).

Calculation of the examination mark

- Translation and grammatical analysis Old-Babylonian – Dutch in transcription: 50%
- Transliteration, transcription, translation and grammatical analysis Old-Babylonian – Dutch in cuneiform writing: 25%
- Theme Dutch – Old-Babylonian: 25%

Facilities for Working Students

Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance.
Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year.

Feedback can be given by email or during an appointment.